RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES AND SCHOOL CULTURE

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Abstract

This study examined the relationships between the leadership competencies of school principals and school culture at selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar. Two hundred and twenty-eight teachers in selected Education Colleges were chosen as the sample by using the purposive sampling method. Data for the quantitative study were collected using the *Competency Approach* survey developed by Glover (2015) to measure the perceptions of teachers about the leadership competencies of school principals and the *School Culture Triage Survey* developed by Wanger (2006, as cited in Glover, 2015) to measure the perceptions of teachers about school culture. For the qualitative data, interviews were conducted with 20 teachers from four selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar to obtain detailed information. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and the Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient through SPSS software. When studying the perceptions of teachers on principals' leadership competencies, generally, teachers from selected Education Degree Colleges perceived that their principals' leadership competencies were moderate, with a mean value of 3.62. In addition, this study also found that school culture was high, with a mean value of 3.72. Moreover, this study also revealed that principals' leadership competencies ($r=.586$, $p<.01$) were positively and moderately correlated with school culture at selected Education Degree Colleges. In addition, the qualitative data provided by interviews with teachers was consistent with the quantitative findings.
Keywords: principals' leadership competencies, school culture

Introduction

A school principal occupies a key position in the schooling system. Principals are primarily concerned with their school's overall mission, philosophy, working assumptions, educational program, and school design, values, and beliefs, as well as the quality and relevance of the school's broad goals and objectives. Consequently, the roles and responsibilities of school principals comprise creating a strategy to improve the learning process, identifying school best practices, and developing leadership. A school principal should be qualified and have sufficient experience in the educational sector, while at the same time having strong character. Again, school leadership needs personalities with educational backgrounds and teaching experiences (Simkins et al., 2003, as cited in Glover, 2015). As a result, the quality of education depends primarily on the way schools are managed by school principals (Mulford & Silins, 2003, as cited in Glover, 2015). Thus, a principal's leadership has a profound impact on the school site organization (Boyd et al., 2011, as cited in Glover, 2015).

On the other hand, school organizations are composed of individuals who have different socioeconomic statuses, styles of living, rules, and values. Today, successful leaders have to maintain about school culture, pay attention to the pressures of change, and holistically evaluate their organizations' environment. Specifically, the wide-angle view related to the school culture offers leaders a broader framework for a deeper

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understanding of the school climate and complex relationships within the school organization. The notion of culture is intended to explain the character of the school as it reflects deep patterns of values, beliefs, and traditions that have been composed over time (Atasoy, 2020). In other words, the school culture has an impact on the groups and individuals that associate within the school site.

The focus of this study is to examine the relationship between principals' leadership competencies and school culture at selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar. In the wave of new initiatives and reforms in education, the practices of principal leadership and school culture at the school sites are very important to determine the best routes for achieving greater success in the school system. Thus, it is necessary to study the leadership abilities that are inherent in principal leaders and their aptitudes, which foster a positive culture at the school site for improvement in education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore principals' leadership competencies and school culture at selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the direction of the study:

1. What are the teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership competencies at selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions of their school culture at selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar?
3. Is there any relationship between principals' leadership competencies and school culture as perceived by teachers at selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar?

Scope of the Study

1. The scope of the study was limited to Education Degree Colleges located in Upper Myanmar.
2. The sample colleges were limited to the Education Degree Colleges in which the principals had at least one year of administrative service at the current education colleges.
3. The findings of this study may not be generalized to other Colleges or Universities.

Definitions of Key Terms

- **Principals' Leadership Competencies** refer to the applied skills and knowledge that enable principals to successfully perform in professional, educational, and other life contexts (Gosselin, 2017).
- **School Culture** is defined as the common values and beliefs, the signs and symbols, and the understanding shared among the members of a school (Karadag & Oztekin-Bayir, 2018, as cited in Ismail, Ali Khatibi, & Azam, 2022).
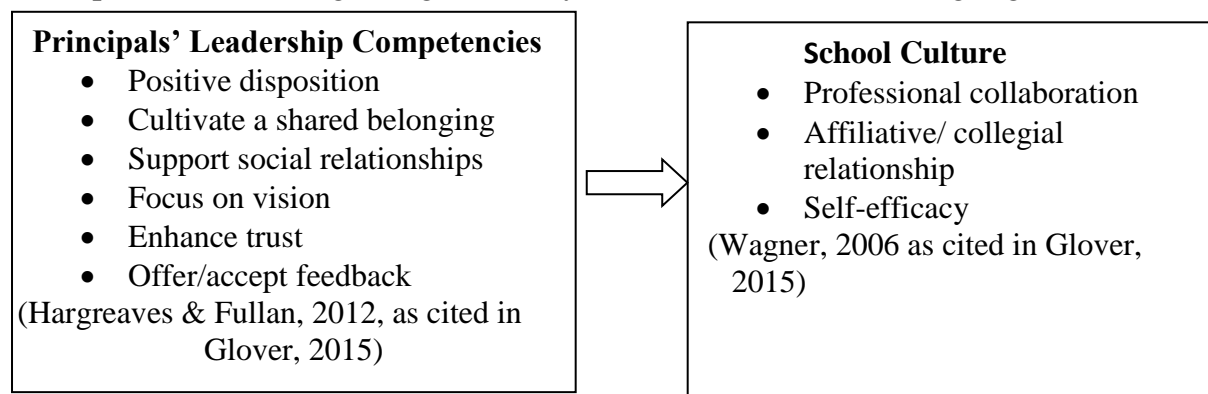
Operational Definitions

- **Principals' Leadership Competencies**: In this study, principals' leadership competencies are defined in terms of six domains: positive disposition, support social relationships, cultivate a shared belonging, focus on vision, enhance trust, and offer or accept feedback (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, as cited in Glover 2015).

- **School Culture**: In this study, school culture is defined in terms of three domains: professional collaboration, collegial relationships, and self-efficacy (Wanger, 2006, as cited in Glover, 2015).

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The reviewed literature on principal leadership's influence on school culture establishes that there is a connection between principal leadership and school site culture. The conceptual framework is centered on four theorists that contribute to the understanding of the purpose of this study: Schein (2004), Deal and Peterson (2009), and Christopher Wagner (2006) (as cited in Glover, 2015).

This survey assesses organizations to determine the need for mending the culture. This study will take that survey and use it concurrently with the study of principal leadership. Using the research on principal leadership competencies and school culture, this study will determine if there is a connection between the two subjects. The conceptual framework guiding this study is summarized in following Figure 1.

Principals' Leadership Competencies	**School Culture**
• Positive disposition • Cultivate a shared belonging • Support social relationships • Focus on vision • Enhance trust • Offer/accept feedback (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, as cited in Glover, 2015)	• Professional collaboration • Affiliative/ collegial relationship • Self-efficacy (Wagner, 2006 as cited in Glover, 2015)

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework for Principals' Leadership Competencies and School Culture

Review of Related Literature

Leadership Competencies of School Principals

In an educational organization, school leaders (headmasters and principals) assume the responsibility of managing and leading all school people according to their respective needs. In addition, school leaders are liaison agents to realize the directives of stakeholders and policymakers such as the Ministry of Education, State Education Offices, and District Education Offices. To perform this responsibility, school leaders need to have the competence and ability to administer the school (Mahmud, 2010, as cited in Kadri, Mansor, & Nor, 2021). School principals' roles and responsibilities include

school planning, providing support for school facilities and infrastructure, and designing strategies that contribute to the quality of education (Rohrmann, 2013, as cited in Hartijasti & Afzal, 2016). Moreover, school principals have the duty to initiate change if external factors force them to do so by restructuring schools, influencing stakeholders to support the new structures, and getting teachers' commitment towards the new initiatives (Simkins et al., 2003, as cited in Hartijasti & Afzal, 2016).

Mahmood (1989, as cited in Kadri et al., 2021) described competence as an important element in school excellence because it is closely related to the initiative of administrators in setting school mission, curriculum and pedagogy knowledge, school administration skills, and relationships with external parties. Thus, every principal must be efficient and have high leadership competencies in carrying out their duties as school leaders. He needs to emphasize aspects of learning and facilitating, school improvement, and student performance and well-being (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Kotter, 1990; Katz, 1993; Leithwood et al., 2004; Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, 2008, as cited in Kadri et al., 2021). The leadership competencies of principals need to be emphasized to ensure the effectiveness of schools.

Dimensions of Principals' Leadership Competencies

The competencies below were found in literature to positively affect a cultural organization. These competencies provide a framework for understanding the leadership of a school culture organization (Glover, 2015).

- **Positive Disposition**

Positive feelings include the feeling of appreciation for others. People want to be appreciated and valued for their efforts, especially in a school setting (Sahin, 2004, as cited in Glover, 2015). In a school organization, teachers have constant contact with the students. The principal leader can directly influence the teachers in the classroom with a positive disposition, which in turn will positively impact the students. A good leader is efficacious, which comes with positivity (Wasickso, 2007, as cited in Glover, 2015). If the principal is showing positivity to teachers, this will reflect on the students. Principals should appreciate others leadership capabilities. According to the studies of positivity by Rath and Clifton (2007, as cited in Glover, 2015), leaders who are positive and share this positive disposition with others have greater results in organizational success.

- **Cultivated a Shared Belonging**

A shared sense of belonging is a needed principal leadership competency, that has been shown to improve culture. The teacher should share participation and leadership with the principal for better connection. When a principal is making key decisions that affect the entire organization, teachers want to be involved (Margolis, 2008, as cited in Glover, 2015). Teachers are directly connected with students on a daily basis, so it is important for a principal to acknowledge their individual input on changes in school

policies so that they are connected and belong to the organization. Connection is important for culture (Sergiovanni, 2004). According to Quay and Quakia (2005, as cited in Lane, 2016), belonging means being a valued member of the school organization while maintaining individuality. This sense of belonging creates a sense of support and connectedness that increases intrinsic motivation by fostering self-confidence and community investment. Belonging can be enhanced by encouraging faculty and staff to be accepting of one another, displaying value and respect for individuals, and providing opportunities for staff to feel connected.

- **Support Social Relationships**

A principal can help develop relationships to build social support and meaning. A principal could encourage collaboration, not only does it foster relationships in the classroom, but it also helps teachers act as resources for each other. It is the responsibility of the principal to offer collaboration time and provide instances where teachers can form relationships (Mihans, 2008, as cited in Glover, 2015). These working conditions are important for school culture. Principals can foster collaboration by promoting a positive school culture (Yager, Pedersen, & Yager, 2010, as cited in Glover, 2015). Thus, relationships are important to the identity of individuals in an organization (Cooperrider, Whitney, Stavros, & Fry, 2008, as cited in Glover, 2015).

- **Focus on Vision**

Vision gives an organization purpose. Having vision is an important characteristic of a principal (J. C. Maxwell, 2013; Mitgang, 2012, as cited in Glover, 2015). When a school site has a vision, it provides an aim for the members of the organization (Kotter, 2012, as cited in Glover, 2015). A clear school vision and the values within the vision are the foundation of the school's culture. The vision has a profound effect on whether teachers and administrators value teamwork, tradition, innovation, and collaboration (Rhodes, Stevens, & Hemmings, 2011). The vision and values are vital to the success of an organization because they have a direct bearing on how the individuals in the organization respond to school operations (Schien, 2004). A positive school is dependent on the vision that is established by the leader and clearly given to the organization as a shared collaboration (Jerald, 2006, as cited in Glover, 2015).

- **Enhance Trust**

When principal leaders trust their staff and involve them in shared decision-making processes, it results in increased staff satisfaction, engagement, and morale. These opportunities can enhance the culture of trust in the school and encourage the school staff to collaborate in the improvement of school performance (Brewster & Railsback, 2003, as cited in Harris, Caldwell, & Longmuir, 2013). Principal leaders can use this culture of trust to establish a 'psychologically safe environment for staff where they can initiate and

trial new ideas and practices without fear of criticism or retribution' (O'Brien, 2011, as cited in Harris et al., 2013).

- **Offer or Accept Feedback**

Feedback is not only a positive word or comment on achievements but also open communication that allows teachers and principals to interact regarding school operations, which affects organizational culture (Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2012). Feedback also includes teachers and principals interacting and having the social comfort of sharing feedback about school processes (Kopkowski, 2008, as cited in Glover, 2015). Teachers feel that their work is effective when they have a sense of influence over operational outcomes. Teachers may have this influence if principals interact with them to ask them for their feedback on school processes. In essence, principal leadership is crucial for influence and sharing the role of leadership with others. When principals share leadership socially, it helps teachers feel valued (Glover, 2015).

School Culture

Every organization has a culture, a history, and an underlying set of unwritten expectations that shape everything about the school. A school's culture influences the ways people think, feel, and act; being able to understand and shape the culture is key to a school's success in promoting staff and student learning. When an organization possesses a strong culture, the culture may provide a structure to shape employee behavior without the need for a rigid bureaucracy that might adversely affect motivation (Peterson, 2002, as cited in Dogan, 2017). From this view, a strong school culture is a key component in establishing and maintaining a positive and effective relationship between employees. It also points to the importance of organizational culture for school organizations reproduction of social relations.

In other words, school culture is the set of shared values, beliefs, and norms that influence the way educators and administrators think, feel, and behave in school. School culture can have a positive impact on student effectiveness. School culture is an important element with regard to student effectiveness in schools (Dogan, 2017). Again, culture is not only a practice of understanding how to learn problem-solving processes but also the different beliefs and behaviors that members within the group exhibit (Bolman & Deal, 2008, as cited in Glover, 2015). Kezar and Eckel (2002, as cited in Dogan, 2017) found that institutional leaders are more successful when they choose strategies and tactics that are relevant and fit with the culture.

Thus, school culture should always be monitored to remain positive. If school culture is deteriorating, the school leadership needs to change the culture of the school. School culture changes may occur through centralized mandates. However, the root cause of change by centralized mandate is because of the school climate, the leadership, and the characteristics of the school with the teachers in particular (Hinde, 2004, as cited in Taahyadin, & Daud, 2018).

Elements of School Culture

Wagner (2006, as cited in Glover, 2015) developed the *School Culture Triage Survey* to determine the health of a school's culture. Wagner's research measures a school's culture based on three behaviours presented in the environment. The three behaviours are: (a) professional collaboration; (b) affiliative and collegial relationships; and (c) efficacy or self-determination. In this study, those elements were used to explore teachers' perceptions of school culture.

- **Professional Collaboration**

The first of the elements of school culture is "professional collaboration". This area examines the way groups of people on the school site come together to solve problems, work on projects, or practice daily activities. This type of cooperation at a school site is important when measuring a school site's effectiveness and successes (Glover, 2015).

Professional collaboration means teachers' collaboration with colleagues, which allows them to learn from each other's expertise, share knowledge within their professional community, and, ultimately, improve the instruction and support they can give to their students (OECD, 2020). According to Doğan and Yurtseven (2018, p. 79, as cited in Methlagl, 2022), "If teachers work in an environment or a community where reflective and collaborative practices exist and they have a shared vision that focuses on student learning, they are likely to improve instructional quality in the classroom".

- **Collegial Relationships**

The second area of culture to be explored is "affiliative and collegial relationships" (Wagner, 2006, p. 42, as cited in Glover, 2015). This discusses how well school members interact and care for each other, as well as how they feel regarded. This aspect of culture examines the human influence of interactions on a school's culture. With the variety of people on any given site, many backgrounds are dependent on one another for success. When these varying cultures are supportive of one another, Wagner's research shows that the overall school culture may be healthy.

In other words, collegial relationships mean working relationships with colleagues and how well teachers interact as part of an education team (Barth, 2006). Collegiality stimulates enthusiasm among teachers and reduces emotional stress and burnout. It also creates a sense of belonging among organizational members and makes the bonds more cohesive. Schools with a good collaborative culture and a strong atmosphere of collegiality have lower attrition rates as compared to other schools. Collegiality helps teachers cope with uncertainty and complexity, respond effectively to rapid change, and create a climate that values risk-taking and continuous improvement (Shah, 2012).

- **Self-Determination or Efficacy**

The final area of school culture that will be examined is "efficacy or self-determination" (Wagner, 2006, p. 42, as cited in Glover, 2015). This area examines the motives of the employees and their sense of worth in the organization. Having a sense of worth for an organization is not only important in terms of understanding culture but also for retaining members and determining what factors of a cultural organization are important.

In other words, teachers' self-efficacy means their beliefs in their ability to effectively handle the tasks, obligations, and challenges related to their professional activity (Barni, Danioni, & Benevene, 2019). Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy are open to new ideas, exhibit greater enthusiasm for teaching, have greater commitment to teaching, and are more likely to remain in teaching (Shambaugh, 2008).

Methodology

Research Method

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect the information about principals' leadership competencies and school culture at selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar. Data were collected through questionnaires survey in quantitative study and open-ended questions and interview questions were used in qualitative study.

Population and Sample

Totally, there are 13 Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar. Among them, the Colleges in which the principal and teachers had at least one year of service at the current Education Degree Colleges were chosen as the sample by using the purposive sampling method. Therefore, four Education Degree Colleges participated in this study. In this study, 228 teachers from four Education Degree Colleges participated in a quantitative study, and 20 teachers at different levels from those Education Degree Colleges participated in a qualitative study.

Instrumentation

In this study, two research instruments — the *Competency Approach* developed by Glover (2015) and the *School Culture Triage Survey (SCTS)* developed by Wagner (2006, as cited in Glover, 2015) —were utilized to collect quantitative data. Moreover, teachers from selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar were asked to respond to 12 interview questions.

Procedure

After receiving the permission of the responsible persons, questionnaires were distributed to teachers at selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar, and they were collected after 10 days from selected Education Colleges. Data obtained from the study were scored, and responses to open-ended questions were organized into categories. Based on the results of the responses, this study was carried out in order to

investigate the relationship between principals' leadership competencies and school culture at selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar.

Data Analysis

The responses of teachers to the questionnaire were analyzed and evaluated using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Descriptive statistics were calculated for principals' leadership competencies and the school culture perceived by teachers. According to Kabakci Yurdakul, Odahasi, Kilicer, Coklar, Birinci, and Kurt (2012, as cited in Gokdas & Torun, 2017), the decision rule for interpreting the levels of the principals' leadership competencies data and school culture data was that the mean value from 1.00 to 2.33 was defined as a very low level. Again, the mean value from 2.34 to 3.67 was defined as a moderate level; the mean value from 3.68 to 5.00 was defined as a very high level.

In addition, the Person-product moment correlation coefficient was utilized to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership competencies and school culture. Open-ended responses and interview questions were categorized and analyzed to complement findings on differences in principals' leadership competencies and school culture perceived by teachers.

Research Findings

Table 1 Mean Values and Standard Deviations for Teachers' Perceptions of Principals' Leadership Competencies at Selected Education Degree Colleges (*N*=228)

Education Degree Colleges		Dimensions of Principals' Leadership Competencies (PLC)						Overall PLC	Remark
		PD	CSB	SSR	FV	ET	OAF		
EDC1(n_1=50)	Mean	3.31	3.79	3.49	3.77	3.52	3.46	3.55	Moderate
	SD	.75	.531	.634	.54	.77	.748	.562	
EDC2(n_2=42)	Mean	**3.74**	**3.77**	**3.64**	**3.69**	**3.71**	**3.74**	**3.72**	**High**
	SD	.612	.639	.703	.70	.685	.767	.640	
EDC3(n_3=65)	Mean	3.59	3.72	3.62	3.63	3.70	3.70	3.65	Moderate
	SD	.762	.781	.807	.665	.747	.808	.724	
EDC4(n_4=71)	Mean	3.49	3.75	3.54	3.61	3.60	3.58	3.59	Moderate
	SD	.794	.626	.692	.618	.705	.779	.652	
Composite Means(*N*=228)	Mean	**3.53**	**3.75**	**3.57**	**3.66**	**3.63**	**3.62**	**3.62**	**Moderate**
	SD	.744	.655	.715	.630	.713	.780	.651	

1.00-2.33= Low level   2.34-3.67= Moderate level   3.68-5.00= High level

Note: PD=Positive Disposition   FV= Focus on Vision

CSB=Cultivated a Shared Belonging   ET= Enhance Trust

SSR= Support Social Relationships   OAF=Offer or Accept Feedback

When studying the perceptions of teachers on principals' leadership competencies at selected Education Degree Colleges as shown in Table 1, the composite mean values for four dimensions of principal leadership competencies (PD, SSR, FV, ET and OAF) were moderate levels and only one dimension of principals' leadership competencies (CSB) was at a high level in selected Education Degree Colleges. Therefore, the composite mean value for overall principal leadership competencies was at a moderate level. However, the mean value of principals' leadership competencies in EDC 2 was high among selected Education Degree Colleges.

Again, when studying the perceptions of teachers on their school culture at selected Education Degree Colleges as shown in Table 2, the composite mean values for two components of school culture (PC and CR) were at high levels, and only one component of school culture (SE) was at a moderate level. However, the composite mean value for overall school culture was at a high level. It was also found that the composite mean values for all components of school culture (PC, CR, and SE) for EDC 4 were at moderate levels among selected Education Degree Colleges.

Table 2 Mean Values and Standard Deviations for Teachers' Perceptions of School Culture at Selected Education Degree Colleges

Education Degree Colleges		Dimensions of School Culture (SC)			Overall SC	Remark
		PC	CR	SE		
EDC1 (n_1=50)	Mean	3.78	3.80	3.83	3.72	High
	SD	.476	.390	.343	.316	
EDC2 (n_2=42)	Mean	3.82	3.92	3.81	**3.85**	High
	SD	.563	.499	.580	.507	
EDC3 (n_3=65)	Mean	3.75	3.82	3.59	3.72	High
	SD	.722	.707	.752	.697	
EDC4(n_4=71)	Mean	**3.56**	**3.60**	**3.51**	**3.60**	**Moderate**
	SD	.706	.612	.766	.638	
Composite Means(*N*=228)	Mean	**3.72**	**3.79**	**3.60**	**3.72**	**High**
	SD	.643	.583	.661	.581	

1.00-2.33= Low Level   2.34-3.67= Moderate level   3.68-5.00= High level

Note: PC= Professional Collaboration   SE= Self-Efficacy

CR= Collegial Relationships

Table 3 describes the correlation between principals' leadership competencies and school culture at selected Education Degree Colleges. Based on the responses of teachers, principals' leadership competencies were positively and moderately correlated with school culture ($r=.586, p<.01$) in selected Education Degree Colleges.

Table 3 Correlation between Principals' Leadership Competencies and School Culture in Selected Education Colleges

Variables	Principals' Leadership Competencies	School Culture
Principals' Leadership Competencies	1	.586** .000
School Culture	.586** .000	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the open-ended responses, teachers expressed that their principals had good relationships with fellow teachers and had empathy, sympathy, and ethical behaviours. Moreover, teachers presented that their principals had critical thinking and creative thinking skills to carry out the schools' tasks. In addition, teachers also stated that their principals often discussed instructional strategies with them and encouraged teachers to help each other in order to improve instructional practices.

The interview responses of teachers are as follows:

Concerning their principals' leadership qualities, all teachers replied that their principals had a great deal of knowledge and skills to manage the school and guide the teaching and learning process, and they gave them opportunities to attend workshops and in-service training in order to grow their professional development.

Concerning their principals' relationship with fellow teachers, 75% of teachers answered that their principals treated teachers warmly and solved the teachers' personal problems as their own.

Concerning their principals' appreciation for teachers' accomplishments or outstanding tasks, 70% of teachers replied that their principals appreciated dutiful teachers orally in front of people.

Concerning their principals' management of having a good relationship among teachers, all teachers responded that their principals encouraged them to collaborate with each other in doing school activities, to have mutual respect and understanding, and to have a good relationship with each other.

Concerning how their principals managed the school to be successful, all teachers responded that their principals allocated school activities to the right person for the right job and managed their implementation. In addition, they cooperated with heads of department and fellow teachers to implement the mission and vision of the school.

Concerning teachers' trust in their principals, 85% of teachers answered that they totally trusted their principals because they had good qualities such as empathy, sympathy, and skill in everything, especially in the management of school affairs.

Concerning how their principals performed if teachers' performance was poor, 85% of teachers responded that their principals gave them constructive feedback, although 15% of teachers said that their principals reprimanded those teachers.

Concerning how their principals got teachers' advice about school activities, 20% of teachers answered that their principals consulted only the heads of departments about school activities such as establishing school discipline, holding sports competitions, and exam affairs, but 80% of teachers said that their principals asked for their advice relating to keeping the school environment clean, teaching aid competitions, religious ceremonies, academic competitions, and the teaching and learning process.

Concerning how teachers collaborated with each other in the teaching process and professional development activities, 55% of teachers answered that they frequently met and discussed teaching strategies, observed each other's teaching, and provided constructive feedback to each other. In addition, 45% of teachers said that the new teachers learned the teaching styles of experienced teachers and discussed their difficulties with their colleagues.

Concerning how teachers communicated with each other at school, all teachers answered that they communicated with each other as friendly and openly as family members.

Concerning how teachers helped if their colleagues had difficulties, all teachers replied that they taught the students if their colleagues were absent or ill instead of them and provided advice and money if their colleagues encountered social difficulty.

Concerning whether teachers had autonomy in their teaching or not, all teachers responded that they had autonomy in their teaching, such as giving assignments, using suitable teaching methods, making teaching aids, and assessing the students' understanding of the lessons.

Discussion and Conclusion

The main purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between principals' leadership competencies and school culture in the selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar. In order to study the principals' leadership competencies and school culture, questionnaire surveys were carried out to collect data. The Competency Approach by Glover (2015) and the School Culture Triage Survey by Wagner (2006, as cited in Glover, 2015), were employed in order to obtain the necessary information. The principals' leadership competencies involved 22 items, and the school culture survey consisted of 16 items. The researcher surveyed two hundred and twenty-eight teachers at the selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar. Descriptive statistics were conducted to study the teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership competencies and school culture in selected Education Degree Colleges.

Research question one examined teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership competencies in selected Education Degree Colleges. When examining the

teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership competencies, teachers from selected Education Degree Colleges rated the level of their principals' leadership competencies as moderate. In other words, principals from selected Education Degree Colleges possessed a moderate level of leadership competencies such as a positive disposition, supporting social relationships, cultivating a sense of shared belonging, focusing on vision, enhancing trust, and offering or accepting feedback. Based on the qualitative findings, teachers from selected Education Colleges perceived that their principals had a great deal of knowledge, empathy, sympathy, and skills in managing school and office affairs. In addition, they gave teachers opportunities to attend workshops and in-service trainings and treated them warmly. Moreover, their principals appreciated teachers for working hard and gave them constructive feedback if necessary. In this study, it was found that quantitative and qualitative findings were consistent.

Research question two examined the teachers' perceptions of their school's culture. When examining teachers' perceptions of their school culture, teachers from selected Education Degree Colleges rated their school culture as high. In other words, teachers from selected Education Degree Colleges had high practices of collegial relationships, professional collaboration, and self-efficacy. Again, teacher responses of qualitative findings pointed out that they collaborated with each other in the teaching process and professional development activities, frequently met and discussed teaching strategies, observed each other's teaching, and provided constructive feedback to each other if necessary. In addition, they communicated with each other in a friendly and open manner. Moreover, teachers in the selected Education Colleges work together effectively. Therefore, their school culture promoted professional collaboration, collegial relationships, and the self-efficacy of teachers. In this study, quantitative and qualitative findings were complementary.

Research question three studied the relationship between principals' leadership competencies and school culture in selected Education Degree Colleges in Upper Myanmar. According to the findings, there was a positive and moderate relationship between principals' leadership competencies and school culture. This finding was congruent with the findings of Glover's (2015) and Lane's (2016) studies, which showed that there was a significant positive correlation between principal leadership competencies and school culture. Thus, this study's findings were complementary to previous research. In other words, the more the level of principals' leadership competencies increases, the more the level of school culture also increases.

Suggestions

Developing the leadership competencies of principals is crucial for a school to achieve effectiveness, as it enhances the quality of school management and promotes educational outcomes. The Ministry of Education should give training to school principals on educational leadership. Only then will principals become the effective

leaders in schools and gain a better understanding of how to lead depending on the environmental context of the school organization. If so, principals' leadership competencies will have a positive impact on their school culture. Thus, it is important that the Ministry of Education should provide in-service training for educational leaders in order to create, shape, and maintain a positive school culture.

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